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TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 2602  
INFO RUEHZL/EUROPEAN POLITICAL COLLECTIVE PRIORITY  
RUEHPS/AMEMBASSY PRISTINA PRIORITY 0369  
RUCNDT/USMISSION USUN NEW YORK PRIORITY 0395

C O N F I D E N T I A L ATHENS 001405

SIPDIS

DEPT ALSO FOR EUR/SE, EUR/SCE (SHIRATORI AND TOMLYANOVIC),  
AND IO/UNP

E.O. 12958: DECL: 10/06/2018

TAGS: [PREL](#) [UNGA](#) [UN](#) [KV](#) [SR](#) [GR](#)

SUBJECT: GREECE/KOSOVO: SEEKING EU CONSENSUS TO ABSTAIN ON  
ICJ RESOLUTION - OTHERWISE LIKELY TO VOTE "YES"

REF: A. STATE 105796

[1](#)B. ATHENS 1346

Classified By: Ambassador Daniel V. Speckhard for 1.4 (b) and (d)

[1](#)1. (C) On October 6, Ambassador Speckhard raised with Ambassador Constantinos Halistanis, FM Bakoyannis' Chief of Staff, reftel points on the Kosovo ICJ resolution at the UNGA. The Ambassador highlighted the potentially harmful effects of referring Kosovo's independence to the ICJ, as it could detract from stability in the Balkans. The Ambassador also noted that an ICJ ruling could also have a potential impact on other sensitive situations around the world of interest to Greece.

[1](#)2. (C) Halistanis responded that Greece is following this issue closely. As a position of principle, Greece prefers that disputes be settled in international fora, such as the ICJ. That said, Greece also understands that it is hard to predict the consequences of referring the case to the ICJ, or the eventual outcome of any ICJ review. However, Greece also sees this as an opportunity to get the Kosovo issue "out of the system" in Serbia for a while. Putting the matter in the hands of the court would also remove the matter from day-to-day politics in Serbia, giving the Serbian government breathing space in dealing with opposition critics.

[1](#)3. (C) With regard to Greece's vote at the UNGA, Halistanis reiterated what we have previously heard from GOG officials (ref B): Greece would welcome an EU consensus to abstain on the Serbian resolution. Should that consensus not be reached, Greece would "find it difficult not to support Serbia's resolution." Halistanis then said that no final decision has been taken by the GOG on this issue, and he promised to pass on USG concerns to FM Bakyoannis. He concluded by noting that Greece has a strong interest in regional stability and that this interest will guide its position on the issue.

SPECKHARD